

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are currently pending. No changes have been made to the claims. Therefore, claims 1-17 remain pending in this application, of which claims 1 and 14 are independent claims. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,324,515 to Rabipour et al. ("Rabipour") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,172,974 to Tseng et al. ("Tseng"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection on the ground that neither Rabipour nor Tseng, when taken singly or in combination thereof, teaches or suggests the claimed subject matters of the invention.

The distinguishable differences of Rabipour and Tseng from the invention have been disclosed in the Amendment filed on December 28, 2005 in response to the Office Action mailed October 3, 2005. For example, Rabipour fails to disclose, teach or suggest any transcoder-free operation (TrFO). Indeed, Rabipour merely discloses an arrangement for avoiding tandem coding in a telecommunication system, wherein the terminals include vocoders with preferably only one encoder unit and a plurality of decoder units. Information regarding the supported decoders is transmitted to the base station of the opposite terminal, and the base stations then carry out handshaking, whereby suitable decoders are chosen for use in both terminals such that a TFO connection is established. Thus, Rabipour does not disclose, teach or suggest any transcoder-free operation (TrFO).

Indeed, the claimed invention may relates to a transcoder-free operation (TrFO) in a mobile communication system, wherein the transcoders are not a part of transmission part, but they are only connected when particularly needed. In such a system, a switching center (MSC) controls the operations of a transcoder, not a base station as described in Rabipour. The transcoder-free operation (TrFO) is a default setting, and only when no common speech codec is available for the terminals of the connection, the MSC connects a transcoder from a transcoder unit for the connection.

On the contrary, in Rabipour, the transcoders, while located in the base stations, are a part of the transmission path and transcoding is a default setting for the operation, which has to be separately switched off (col. 10, l. 26-35) in case of TFO operation. In Rabipour, it is not possible to choose the most suitable speech codec, since there is only one encoder unit available in each terminal, for which a corresponding decoder unit should be found in the receiving terminal in order to establish TFO operation. Accordingly, Rabipour fails to enable optimization of the transmission bandwidth in terms of a used speech encoding scheme.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Rabipour fails to teach or suggest the underlined features of claim 1 as follows.

Claim 1. A digital telecommunication system comprising:
a first centre configured to enable speech communication between a plurality of terminals, the first centre being associated with a calling terminal and including a first transcoder unit;
a second centre that is configured to enable speech communication between a plurality of terminals, the second centre being associated with a called terminal and including a second transcoder unit;
wherein the first and second transcoder units each include speech codecs; and each of the terminals comprises one or more speech codecs, each including an encoder unit and a decoder unit, the terminals being arranged to provide information on the supported one or more speech codecs to their associated switching centres;
the first centre is configured to perform handshaking with the second centre, the handshaking including indication of the speech codecs supported by the calling terminal, wherein at least one of the first and second centres is configured to choose the speech codec used commonly by the calling and called terminals, and wherein at least one of the first and second centres is configured to establish call connections that bypass one or more of the transcoder units or to control the transcoder units to transmit encoded speech between the called and the calling terminals without performing speech encoding operations so that speech is encoded and decoded only in the terminals.

Similarly, Rabipour fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed centre in a digital telecommunication network configured to receive information regarding supported one or more speech codecs of a calling terminal, each speech codec including an encoder unit and a decoder unit, and connect a transcoder located in a transcoder unit to a call connection when required, wherein: the centre is configured to perform handshaking with another centre associated with a called terminal, the handshaking including indication of speech codecs supported by the calling terminal associated with the centre, the centre also being configured to choose the speech codec commonly used by the terminals...,” as recited in independent claim 14.

Furthermore, in the present invention, when searching for the common speech codec, the MSCs are informed of the speech codecs supported by the terminals, and the MSCs choose the best speech codec to be used on the connection. Thus, even if Rabipour was combined with Tseng, there would not be a teaching for accomplishing transcoder-free operation in a mobile communication system, since the terminals of Tseng do not participate

in the selection of inter-MSC coding and Tseng's centres do not choose any codec for the terminals to use.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that it would not been obvious for one skilled in the art to combine Rabipour and Tseng to achieve the claimed invention because the combination of Rabipour and Tseng does not disclose every element of independent claims 1 and 14. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 14 and their dependent claims 2-13 and 15-17 should be patentable over Rabipour in view of Tseng and the rejections of these claims should be withdrawn.

All objections and rejections having been addressed, Applicant requests that the Office issue a Notice of Allowance indicating the allowability of all the pending claims. However, if anything remains necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, Applicant requests that the Examiner telephone the undersigned Applicant representative.

Please charge any fees associated with the submission of this paper to Deposit Account Number 033975. The Commissioner for Patents is also authorized to credit any over payments to the above-referenced Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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